

retired to East Hampton, where they have become deeply involved with the Jewish Center of the Hamptons. For over a decade, Bernie has volunteered as the Baal Koreh, or Master of Reading, the officiant who reads the Torah from scroll in the synagogue on the Sabbath.

Mr. Speaker, I honor Bernie Epstein for his invaluable and continuing contributions to our community. It is my great hope that he will serve as an inspiration for other through his good works and devotion to his country.

RECOGNIZING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE KELLEY HOUSE MUSEUM

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 10, 2011

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Kelley House on the Mendocino Coast in Northern California. Located in the picturesque village of Mendocino, the Kelley House was originally a private home. Since 1972 the Kelley House has been a museum and quality research facility which collects, protects, preserves, and shares the rich history of the coastal community through its museum and quality research facility.

William Henry Kelley first came to Mendocino in 1852 to work for the California Lumber Manufacturing Company. After working his way up in rank, he returned to his birthplace of Prince Edward Island, Canada, married Eliza Lee Owen, and returned to Mendocino with his new bride in 1855. William built the Kelley House in 1861 on an acre of beautifully landscaped, ocean view property in downtown Mendocino. The gardens include a pond and two resident geese. William had the pond built and stocked so that the neighborhood children could fish.

Through its staffed research office, the museum has preserved over three thousand entries of maps, documents, books, photographs, oral histories, and artifacts representing more than 150 years of history along the Mendocino Coast.

Through the combined efforts of a dedicated board of directors and staff, volunteers, local sponsors and generous donations from community members, the Kelley House Museum continues to serve its community with annual events and accessible historic information.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, it is my honor and pleasure to recognize the 150th anniversary of the Kelley House, a fixture of downtown Mendocino, for its invaluable service and historic importance to the community.

COMMENDING THE SERVICE OF MAJOR GENERAL H. LLOYD WILKERSON, USMC RET. TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

HON. HEATH SHULER

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 10, 2011

Mr. SHULER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Major General H. Lloyd Wilkerson, USMC ret. for a life dedicated to serving his

country and helping others in Western North Carolina.

H. Lloyd Wilkerson was born in Troy, Tennessee, on October 31, 1919. After graduating from Erskine College in 1941 with degrees in mathematics and english, he was an inspector for Retail Credit Company in Columbia and Charleston, South Carolina.

At the outbreak of World War II, Wilkerson enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps. He quickly advanced through the ranks, serving as Platoon Sergeant and then Second Lieutenant. He served in combat in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. He became Chief of Staff of the Marine Corps Base in Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. In 1972, he was promoted to Brigadier General and became Commanding General of that Base. Subsequently, as a Major General, he served as Deputy Chief of Staff for Research, Development and Studies at the Headquarters of the U.S. Marine Corps in Washington, Commanding General of the Third Marine Division, and Commanding General of the III Marine Amphibious Force in the Far East. His final assignment, prior to his retirement on May 31, 1978, was as Director of Personnel Management Division/Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Manpower at Headquarters of the U.S. Marine Corps in Washington, D.C.

Since his retirement, Major General Wilkerson has been involved in countless volunteer and appointed positions in his church, alma mater, and community. He served as President of the North Carolina Scottish Rite Masonic Foundation, Inc. which annually provided more than \$200,000 to support clinics for childhood language disorders at East Carolina University, Appalachian State University, and the Scottish Rite Temple at Charlotte.

Wilkerson has gone above and beyond to serve our country through military service and countless volunteer programs. It is an honor to represent selfless, hardworking soldiers like Major General Wilkerson whose devotion to our country is a great source of pride to me and to Western North Carolina. I ask my colleagues to join me today in recognizing Major General H. Lloyd Wilkerson.

COMMENDING DEFEAT OF INITIATIVE 26 BY MISSISSIPPI VOTERS

HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 10, 2011

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to thank the voters of Mississippi who went to the polls on Tuesday, November 7, and decisively rejected Initiative 26, the so-called "Personhood Amendment" to the state's constitution. By a margin of 41 to 58 percent, the voters of Mississippi turned back a thinly-veiled attempt to deprive women of their constitutionally protected freedom to make their own reproductive health decisions.

No matter what your position is in the pro-choice/pro-life debate, the reach of Initiative 26 was so broad and its provisions so extreme that thousands of the most sincere, thoughtful, and committed pro-life activists could not in good conscience support the measure.

Initiative 26, which was the brainchild of the anti-choice group Personhood USA, sought to redefine the legal definition of a "person" to

include "every human being from the moment of fertilization, cloning or the functional equivalent thereof." If the measure had passed and gone into effect, it would have outlawed abortion in all circumstances, even when the life of the mother was in imminent danger. And it would have put an end to stem-cell research, banned several of the most common forms of birth control, and restricted fertility treatments such as in-vitro fertilization.

Since the Supreme Court issued its decision in *Roe v. Wade* in 1973, anti-choice activists have been relentless in their efforts to overturn that decision or find new ways to impede women from exercising their right to choose. "Personhood" initiatives are merely the latest scheme designed to turn back the clock on women's reproductive health rights. Proponents sought to road test their "personhood amendment" strategy in the very conservative and pro-life state of Mississippi before taking it national.

Mr. Speaker, Initiative 26 was worded so broadly that even its backers freely admitted that it would ban some of the most common methods of birth control like IUDs and the birth-control and "morning after" pill. But the reach of Initiative 26 goes further than shutting down clinics, much further. This personhood initiative takes it too far by effectively criminalizing abortion without exceptions for rape, incest or health and life of the mother.

Mr. Speaker, what was especially pernicious about Initiative 26 is that it would have outlawed the generally accepted medical practices used by health care professionals in situations where the life or health of the mother is imperiled. Saving a woman's life should be the first priority. If Initiative 26 were to become law, however, saving the life or preserving the health of the mother, by aborting the pregnancy if necessary, would be regarded as a criminal act.

It should be noted also, Mr. Speaker, that Initiative 26 is so far reaching that it would discourage the practice of in vitro fertilization, if not ban it altogether. Through the years, in vitro fertilization has enabled millions of childless couples to experience the miracle of become loving parents to wanted children. It makes no sense for persons who profess a preference for life and family values to champion a measure like Initiative 26 which would outlaw in vitro fertilization.

Symbolic "personhood" amendments cause unnecessary political rancor and division. They are distractions we can ill afford. We should instead be focusing our efforts on the real problem facing our nation and that is creating jobs and revitalizing our economy.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to stand in opposition to dangerous and diversionary personhood initiatives like Initiative 26. I congratulate the citizens of Mississippi for resoundingly rejecting Initiative 26.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF BRIGADIER GENERAL CURTIS J. IRWIN

HON. ANN MARIE BUERKLE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 10, 2011

Ms. BUERKLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Brigadier General Curtis J.

Irwin, who, at the age of 88, passed away peacefully at his home in North Syracuse, New York on Wednesday, October 5th, 2011.

Brigadier General Irwin was born in Syracuse on November 4th, 1922, to the late Joseph A. and Violet M. Irwin. He was preceded in death by his wife, Natalie J. Irwin "Noble Nanny" and his sister, Marilyn J. Irwin Boison.

A combat veteran of WWII, he served as commander of the 174th Fighter Wing, (formally the 174th Fighter Group) New York Air National Guard at Hancock Field from January 1st, 1958 until March 13th, 1977. He retired from the New York Air National Guard on August 31st, 1978.

General Irwin's flying career spanned more than 35 years, beginning when he was still attending North Syracuse High School. Working weekends at the old Amboy Airport, he received compensation for his labor in flight instruction.

He began his military service in August of 1942 and entered pilot training the following March. After winning his wings and commissioning as a Second Lieutenant in the Army Air Corps in May of 1944, he served in the Pacific Theatre of Operations as a fighter pilot flying the P-47 Thunderbolt.

Campaigns in which he participated include the China Offensive, Western Pacific, and the Air Offensive of Japan and the Ryukyus Islands. He was decorated with the Air Medal, the Oak Leaf Cluster, and four battle stars for his wartime service.

Following World War II, General Irwin was an original member and assisted in the organization of the Air National Guard in Syracuse. While commander of the 174th Fighter Wing, General Irwin saw the unit undergo many aircraft conversions and unit changes. It was the first unit to operate jet aircraft in New York State and in 1951, was selected as one of the two units in the country to test a secret program of runway alert to augment the Air Force. The results were so successful that this program is to this day a vital part of the United States' air defense.

In 1960, the 174th was recognized by the National Guard Bureau as the most combat-ready F-86 unit in the country. During the Berlin Crisis in 1961, the 174th was activated and within 30 days, all personnel, planes, and equipment were deployed to Phalsbourg Air Base in France. This was the largest movement of jet fighter aircraft in Europe since World War II. General Irwin led his unit's planes and crews across the northern Atlantic route via Labrador, Greenland, Iceland, Scotland, and on to the mainland of Europe. Despite many dramatic moments, all arrived safely on the continent. The unit was again called up during the Pueblo Crisis and was deployed to Cannon Air Force Base in New Mexico.

In addition to his military service, General Irwin was instrumental in linking the 174th Fighter Wing with the local community. He organized a program of community education for planning and zoning actions compatible with aviation growth.

Honors bestowed upon General Irwin are many. General Irwin was awarded the Governor's Trophy in 1960, 1973, and 1976. In addition, he received the first Department of Defense Award for Domestic Action in 1971. Thompson Road through Hancock Air Base now bears his name and is called the "General Curtis Irwin Parkway". In our local com-

munity, General Irwin was named to the North Syracuse School District Wall of Distinction in 1990.

Surviving General Irwin are his children, Laurinda "Laurie" A. Irwin of Cottage Grove, Minnesota; Sheila M. (Lester) Austin of Lafayette, New York; Lisette "Lisa" Damon of North Syracuse; several nieces and nephews; his longtime companion Betty Tryon of Liverpool; and his 174th Fighter Wing Family.

On behalf of the people of the 25th District of New York and a grateful Nation, I thank General Irwin for his service.

TRIBUTE TO MS. ANNA MARIA CHÁVEZ

HON. CHARLES A. GONZALEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 10, 2011

Mr. GONZALEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Anna Maria Chávez and to congratulate her on her appointment as the 19th Chief Executive of Girl Scouts of the USA. Ms. Chávez officially assumes her new role at the Girl Scouts National Council Session/52nd Convention being held this week in Houston, Texas.

I am particularly proud that Ms. Chávez joins GSUSA following an incredibly successful term as Chief Executive of Girl Scouts of Southwest Texas in my home district in San Antonio, Texas. During her tenure, Ms. Chávez oversaw a 20 percent increase in membership in just two years. Quickly recognized for her leadership, Ms. Chávez received the inaugural ATHENA Organizational Leadership Award in 2010 and was inducted into the San Antonio Women's Hall of Fame in March 2011.

As the chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, I also take great pride in the fact that Ms. Chávez is the first Latina woman to be named the head of Girl Scouts. Her story began in the small town of Eloy, Arizona, where she was raised in a Mexican-American family.

Ms. Chávez holds a law degree from the University of Arizona College of Law and a bachelor's degree in American history from Yale University. Bar admissions include the U.S. District Court for the District of Arizona, Arizona Supreme Court, and U.S. Supreme Court. Her professional accomplishments are many. Prior to coming to Girl Scouts, she served as deputy chief of staff for urban relations and community development for former Arizona Governor and current U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security, Janet Napolitano. Prior to being appointed as deputy chief of staff, Ms. Chávez served as then Governor Napolitano's director of intergovernmental affairs from 2003 to 2007. She also served as in-house counsel and assistant director for the Division of Aging & Community Services (DACs) at the Arizona Department of Economic Security. Ms. Chávez entered state government after serving as senior policy advisor to U.S. Secretary of Transportation Rodney E. Slater. Previously, she had been chief of staff to the deputy administrator at the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) in Washington, D.C. Ms. Chávez also served as chief of staff for SBA's Office of Government Contracting and Minority Enterprise Development.

As she takes the helm at Girl Scouts of the USA, Ms. Chávez will shepherd a dramatic period of change for the organization. This week, Girl Scouts will kick off its 100th Anniversary celebration, designating 2012 as the Year of the Girl. In the coming years, Girl Scouts has plans to promote its award winning Girl Scout Leadership Program, including the exciting new badge book, The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting. Girl Scouts is also preparing to launch an ambitious new fundraising effort tied to these activities, and to elevate public awareness about girls' unique needs.

As relevant today as it was when it was founded 100 years ago, this organization delivers the best leadership experience for a new generation of girls whose lives—and the opportunities they face—are ever changing. I am confident that Anna Maria Chávez will continue this strong legacy of leadership and service, and look forward to working with her for many years to come.

CONGRATULATORY REMARKS FOR OBTAINING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT—STEPHEN MICHAEL TIMMES

HON. SANDY ADAMS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 10, 2011

Mrs. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Stephen Michael Timmes for achieving the rank of Eagle Scout.

Throughout the history of the Boy Scouts of America, the rank of Eagle Scout has only been attained through dedication to concepts such as honor, duty, country and charity. By applying these concepts to daily life, Stephen has proven his true and complete understanding of their meanings, and thereby deserves this honor.

I offer my congratulations on a job well done and best wishes for the future.

CONGRATULATING THORSEN'S PLUMBING & AIR CONDITIONING ON THEIR 100TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. JEFF DENHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 10, 2011

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Thorsen's Plumbing & Air Conditioning Inc. on their 100th Anniversary. This dedicated business continues to bring economic vitality to the region.

On November 11, 1911, Andy Thorsen Sr. started his plumbing business as a one man shop in a shed attached to his first home on 567 High Street in Turlock, California. November 17, 1911, he obtained a city license in the name of "Thorsen's Plumbing" and began working out of his house at 567 High Street. Andy would ride his bicycle to jobs, carrying 200 pound bundles of 20 foot pipe on his shoulder. In 1916, Andy relocated to 214 Lander Avenue with the sign "Andy Thorsen, The Plumber". Andy was the first business person in Turlock to use a horseless carriage for his business, a Model T Ford with special tires for the rough and muddy roads.